



For Immediate Release
May 28, 2008

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BAUCUS WELCOMES WTO CASE AGAINST EU TECHNOLOGY TARIFFS

USTR action follows Finance hearing on trade enforcement legislation

Washington, D.C. – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today welcomed the U.S. Trade Representative's decision to request World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement consultations with the European Union (EU). The case challenges duties the EU imposes on innovative technologies that should be duty-free under the WTO Information Technology Agreement (ITA).

"This is exactly the kind of enforcement I called for during last week's hearing and I commend Ambassador Schwab for taking action," said Baucus. **"We must foster innovation and open markets for American companies and our trade enforcement tools must keep pace. I look forward to passing legislation this year that will give USTR the enforcement tools American workers and businesses deserve."**

Today's action requests formal WTO consultations with the EU and initiates the WTO dispute settlement process. In the event that consultations fail to resolve the issue the United States may request a review and judgment by an official WTO panel. Senator Baucus introduced the Trade Enforcement Act of 2007 (S. 1919) last year to increase the enforcement capabilities of the U.S. Trade Representative and other agencies. The Senate Finance Committee plans to mark-up the legislation this summer.

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